THE New Republic

Bill Knowland:
Boob in Armor
An Editorial

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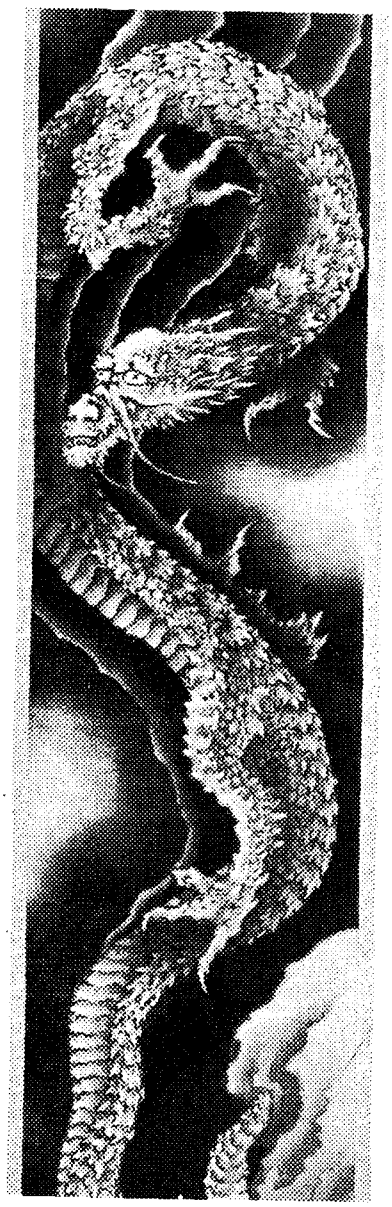

How We "See" the Chinese Communists

By HAROLD R. ISAACS

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Who Are the Intellectuals?

By MALCOLM COWLEY

FEBRUARY 25, 1957

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Washington Wire

The Changing Parties

IF AMERICA is ever to have a responsible two-party system the parties must have greater continuity and discipline. The slow movement toward this has accelerated in recent years. Between 1924-28, for example, the Democrats didn't even have a national headquarters. Those times are past. Again, the national committees formerly hibernated three out of four years. But in 1952 Democrats started the new system of holding national committee meetings three or four times a year, with regional rotation. Now the Democrats have set up their important new National Advisory Council.

That is the real significance of the weekend Democratic rally in San Francisco, where Stevenson spoke. Some day or other we are going to have real political parties in America with annual conventions as they have in parliamentary countries and a constant focus of political thought. Big forces are pushing in that direction. As the world shrinks issues become less and less petty and local and more and more national and international. The party competition gets tougher; for example, the GOP has now invaded the South. The place of the free-wheeling "boss" is diminishing. Furthermore, as Adlai Stevenson points out, you can't extemporize a victory in a two months' campaign; it is a year-in year-out job. We have always had the hunch that the first American party that instituted the system of annual, or at any rate mid-term, conventions would win the next election.

What the San Francisco Democratic meeting tried to do was to emphasize that the real leadership of the party is national, not the Texas Johnson-Rayburn leadership in Congress. It empowered the weak but promising Advisory Council to "interpret" policies between conventions. That is a push toward continuity. And it endorsed civil-rights legislation which is an assertion of national over Southern leadership. The Southerners will pretend not to notice what has happened, but they do know just the same. For example, we expect Texas Leader Johnson to back some kind of moderate civil rights legislation, and to try to head off a filibuster.

Suez Solution

WE HAVE always thought the Eisenhower-Dulles Middle East maneuver in Congress something of a phony. It transformed an absence of policy into a "doctrine." Eisenhower wants Congress as a co-signer of a blank check of "authorization" to do something which he has authority to do anyway. It is important, of course, to have the world know that the US is united to resist Communist aggression in the Middle East. Once the President made his appeal, it was evident that Congress would have to respond. Congress does not object to an affiliation of national interest there; Congress welcomes any affirmation of policy from the White House. (Most of us had supposed we would resist Communist aggression in any case!) But the Democrats see a slick maneuver to make it appear that they endorse the fiasco of Dulles' Suez policy. The fact is that they are just about fed up with Dulles. The best thing that has been said about the argument, it strikes us, is Truman's comment that Congress should approve the matter quickly so the Administration can get busy on the real problems involved—a solution for the use of the Canal and a permanent settlement of the Egyptian-Israel feud.

One-Shot Antitoxin

ANYBODY who thinks inflation has been stopped is mistaken. Prices just keep drifting higher. And the Administration is increasingly committed to one means of combatting it, tight money (*i.e.*, rationing credit by raising interest rates). Now this is anti-inflationary all right, but it has this great disadvantage—it fights the disease by consciously weakening the patient; it tries to cut the rate of economic growth, slow down investment and produce a less dynamic economy. It is positively shocking to read some exultant financial articles saying that inflationary pressure is being curbed because such and such a needful activity is slowing down! Is our competitor, Russia, trying to slow down her economy? In general doctors like to make cures by increasing bodily robustness not by diminishing it.

Harvard economist J. K. Galbraith in the current *Atlantic Monthly* points out that under tight money the Bigs can still get credit, the Smalls can't. "It would be hard to find a policy," he says, "better designed to encourage the large and the strong at the expense of the small and the weak." He has one other criticism of the one-shot antitoxin. It doesn't work.

Incidentally, the Treasury has just announced it will increase interest rates on E & H savings bonds by ¼ of one percent—not a very generous amount in view of savings banks and similar competition. The Treasury is in an awful box on this one. There are $40 billion worth of these bonds out, but investors are drifting away. The Treasury must raise the rates to hold its investors, but if it raises them too high, owners of old bonds will cash in and switch-over. The Treasury is caught by its own tight money policy, of course, which is forcing interest rates up everywhere. George Humphrey came to office pledged to do just the opposite thing. He was going to reduce the carrying charge on the nation's debt, instead of which it is now (a) going up, (b) at an all time high, and (c) taking one dollar of every $10 in the budget! How truculent and positive he was in 1953.

Notes

US POPULATION has now touched 170 million—growing 3 million a year; it is America's biggest domestic problem though nobody likes to talk about it, still less plan about it. . . . Assistant Secretary of Defense Robert Tripp Ross has silently tripped away, the latest conflict-of-interest businessman who didn't let his right hand in government know what his left hand was doing. . . . The president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors has finally come out against the Dulles ban on American reporters entering Red China following tactfully after the publishers' condemnation; better late than never, and always safer to lead public opinion from the rear.

T.R.B.

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The New Republic

A JOURNAL OF OPINION

FEBRUARY 25, 1957

THE WEEK 3
Boob in Armor; Deadlock in Gaza; Beyond the Doctrine; Communist Party—USA; Little Orphan Annie; The China Taboo

ARTICLES 7
How We "See" the Chinese Communists by Harold R. Isaacs
Who Are the Intellectuals? by Malcolm Cowley

BOOKS AND COMMENT 17
Reviews: The Hungarian Tragedy; Eloges; The Day the Money Stopped; A Thirsty Evil

ART 21

MUSIC 22

Photos: *Front cover, Smithsonian Institution, Freer Gallery of Art; p. 8, Eastfoto; p. 10, Bettmann Archive; p. 12, Wide World; p. 13, Eastfoto*

VOL. 136, NO. 8, ISSUE 2204

Correspondence

► *Is Israel Expansionist?*

SIRS:

IN the year and a half since I left the Middle East I have spoken with no American who had been in the Arab countries, as well as Israel, who was not in sympathy with the Arab countries.

With respect to the intentions of the Israelis to expand into Arab territory one had but to watch and hear the Israelis on the television news broadcast following the invasion of Egypt, to become convinced of this. Further documentary evidence are the statements of Ben-Gurion in the Israeli Government Yearbooks for 1952, pp. 9, 13, 15, 16, 23, 47 and 427 and for 1955 p. 320-321. The party platforms of the different Israeli groups are given in the Israeli Office of Information book for 1955 "Facts and Figures" on pp. 17-20. They not only call for the

(*Continued on page 23*)

Boob in Armor

There is joy in jettisoning useless, troublesome commitments that burden our lives. How genial public life becomes when reduced entirely to cordiality and platitudes. The leaders in such a society need not be superior to the crowd in knowledge or virtue; they must be simply quicker. They must be the first to name, and loudest to demand, something that, for the moment, will appeal to the average man. This is no machination on the leaders' part; those will succeed best who are sincere and have divined the people's instinct by passionately trusting their own.
GEORGE SANTAYANA

TIME magazine, which paints fashionable portraits of public figures, drew an heroic picture several weeks ago of William Fife Knowland—"bull-shouldered," "booming-voiced," "honest." A man whose opinions are the result of "careful thought" and who is in the grip of "absolute, unflinching integrity that rises above politics."

And not only integrity. Intelligence too, if we accept F. Scott Fitzgerald's contention that "the test of a first-class intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function." In a recent speech, United Nations delegate Knowland gave a demonstration of this ability: for there he warned that the UN is too weak, and too strong.

It is too weak because of the "abuse of the veto power by the Soviet Union." And how can this be remedied? By reading Second Corinthians which tells us to "be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." Less obliquely stated—throw the Russians out. The quickest and surest way to kill pain is to shoot the patient, in this case the UN.

But at the same time, we must beware of the UN's becoming too strong. Mr. Knowland sees

> an expanding tendency to interfere in the internal affairs of member nations. If this trend continues it will not be long before the UN is injecting itself into a study of the class [*sic*] system in India and the segregation problem in some sections of the United States.

Busybodies would be all over the place. A man wouldn't be able to call his immoralities his own. Even Communist China might some day be held accountable to the world organization for its continued imprisonment of 10 Americans. If, of course, Mr. Knowland would admit the existence of Communist China.

Having said that the UN is doing too little (and is in danger of doing too much), the Senator adds that he is worried by the "increasing trend to bloc voting." By combining blocs "it is possible to prevent action by the General Assembly in those cases where a two-thirds majority is

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required." How can we prevent such bloc voting? (Or how can we prevent one-third of the US Senate from filibustering?) One can't forbid some nations from voting with other nations. It isn't even desirable. There's one solution; it would not break up blocs, but it would break up bloc voting. Break up the UN.

There's something else we taxpayers ought to know. Uncle Sam pays almost one-third of the UN's bills. (The US contribution for fiscal year 1957 was $16,108,289. Estimated cost of the new atomic-powered aircraft carrier, minus aircraft—$500 million). Some smaller nations, Mr. Knowland points out, claim the right to vote in the UN (worse, vote against us) without showing any willingness "to assume their full share of the burdens." How can we right this economic wrong? Perhaps by some sort of international poll tax. But what could be done with nations which can't, or won't, pay up? Take away their membership. That is, take away the UN.

Admittedly these are all minor criticisms. Fundamentally, the UN is immoral; it has a double-standard. (Since 80 highly diverse nations are members, one would have thought there were many more standards than two). The UN, says Knowland, lets the big fellow off scot-free, while the little fellow is punished—a fact that will be news to the British and the French. We must not conclude from this, however, that the Senator believes the UN should have the power to impose its decision on everyone, including us. For then the UN would be almost a world government and Mr. Knowland, who strongly supports the Bricker Amendment, doesn't want even the President of the United States to have too much authority in foreign affairs. The *correct* conclusion is the UN is not "worth the price." If there were no UN, it could not be plagued by moral ambiguities.

Behold the man who believes that the best way to loosen the grip of the Soviet Union on Poland is to deny Poland Western aid, thus assuring Poland's continued dependence on the Soviet Union. Behold the man who doesn't want to be yoked with the unrighteous in the UN, but who objects to the Senate's censure of Joseph McCarthy because "even the club's pariahs have their rights." Behold the statesman who is "fascinated by Asia's political and economic problem" *(Time)*, who "owes the Neanderthals nothing" *(Time)*, whose "only real hobby . . . is pasting items about the life and times of Bill Knowland into scrapbooks" *(Time)*, and whose "sense of destiny" *(Time)* may take him to the White House.

Deadlock in Gaza

FOR GOOD and different reasons President Eisenhower and Premier Ben-Gurion will find it almost impossible to negotiate further on evacuation of Gaza.

Premier Ben-Gurion has learned from a decade of disappointment that Israel's interests do not head the list of US concerns in the Middle East. America's first goal is the military containment of Soviet power. Goal No. 2 is protection of Middle East oil. The security and welfare of Israel come third.

On most political issues dividing Israel from her Arab neighbors—passage through the Suez and Aqaba, fedayeen raids—Israel could not depend upon our unqualified support. Why? Because Soviet penetration was chiefly in Arab lands and because oil production and pipelines were chiefly in Arab hands. Winning over the Arabs was therefore the principal thing.

ISRAELI leaders judge assurances by Mr. Dulles against this background. Dulles offered American help to establish the right of "innocent passage" through the Gulf of Aqaba, and promised use of American influence to arrange deployment of the UN forces in the Gaza Strip. But Dulles would not say what America would do if Egypt rejected either plan.

Israel's request for assurances on these points would be morally unassailable if that were all she were asking. But she asks more—continued Israeli civil administration of the Gaza Strip, which Israel seized during the recent police action. Gaza is not part of Israel; it has been administered by Egypt for eight years under a UN armistice. The Israeli demand in this instance is morally wrong, seriously limits Mr. Eisenhower's power to negotiate between the two sides.

Israel's Premier also has little latitude. For the "Keep Gaza" drive in Israel is a mass demand, backed by all political parties except the Communists. Gaza is "part of the homeland," newspapers declare, and one minortiy party threatens to bring down the government if Mr. Ben-Gurion concedes an inch.

Given these facts, direct American talks with Israel are not likely to produce a solution. The best hope lies in a third-nation plan for internationalizing the Gaza Strip. If a satisfactory compromise does not emerge before the Suez is ready for navigation of 10,000 ships about March 10, Egypt will force a showdown by embargoing canal travel until Israeli withdrawal is complete.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Beyond the Doctrine

THE Eisenhower Doctrine has emerged from 30 days of acrimonious Senate hearings, changed in form but not in substance, still inadequate as a constructive American policy toward the Middle East.

If the Senate hearings caused temporary damage to the US position abroad, as they may well have, the damage was more than offset by the ringing words of the Senate report, which reads like an open letter to the Soviet presidium. It begins:

> The main purpose of the joint resolution is to put the Soviet Union on notice that Communist aggression in the Middle East would be a serious threat to the vital interests of the US. To this end, the resolution declares the readiness of the US to use armed force to defend the area against overt armed aggression by any country controlled by international communism.

The demand of Democratic Senators for a change in the resolution was motivated in part by constitutional considerations, in part by partisanship. At least some of the Senators wished to humiliate Secretary of State Dulles, and were aided by the slipshod drafting of the Administration. The State Department draft would have "authorized" the President to commit the armed forces of the US against Communist aggression. The President already is authorized by the Constitution to take such action, the Democrats rightly argued. The substitute Democratic language declares that "if the President determines the necessity thereof, the US is prepared to use armed forces to assist nations resisting Communist aggression."

Final Congressional approval of the Eisenhower Doctrine is now assured, but the Doctrine's inadequacies remain. It contributes to an arms race and fails to face up to the need for arms limitation. It ignores the two incendiary issues of the area—Suez and Israel. It offers no constructive approach to the Middle East's economic stagnation.

Some Democratic Senators—notably Mansfield of Montana and Humphrey of Minnesota—tried to keep attention focused on constructive Democratic proposals to solve these problems, but their efforts were submerged in the flood of criticism directed against Secretary Dulles. This left a public image not of a "party of ideas"—to use former Secretary Acheson's phrase—but a party of frustration.

If Democrats now wish to move ahead of the President, why not propose that the UN call a conference of all nations along the Nile River, to examine the joint Nile development problem? Vice President Nixon's visit next month to the headwaters of the Nile makes the suggestion timely.

Why shouldn't Democrats get behind Senator Humphrey's proposal for a UN Commission to control arms in the Middle East? Why not a concerted Democratic drive for a permanent UN Police Force—there are ample ideas around Washington for the composition of the force, its location and responsibilities.

On Suez, would it not be useful to ask a world conference of canal users to discuss alternative pipelines, roads across the Middle East landbridge, and round-Africa tankers? Even plans for such a conference might have a softening effect on President Nasser's rigidity.

Communist Party—USA

THIS MONTH, the American Communist Party painfully cut the umbilical cord that ties the CPUSA to the Soviet Union. William Z. Foster, the Party's Old-Guard leader, raised his aged voice for a world party with the Russians in the parental role. A group centering around the *Daily Worker* and the New York section of the party favored the other extreme: an open attack on Russian policy under both Stalin and Khrushchev.

The most significant fact about this convention is the simple existence of factions openly in conflict. This last occurred in 1929 when the Communist Party right-wing won undisputed control only to be lopped off unceremoniously on cabled orders from the Soviet Union.

Curiously, the most violently debated resolution made no direct reference to the de-Stalinization campaign, Soviet anti-Semitism, the crushing of the Hungarian revolution, the continuing decimation of Communist ranks. These crucial items appeared only as footnotes to a central resolution that dealt with what was apparently a purely organizational matter: should the Communists continue with a *party* or should they set up some educational or political *association*?

To the Communist veteran, however, this minor matter of *organizational form* is as decisive in 1957 as it was to Lenin in 1903 when the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks split the Russian Social-Democratic Party over the question of party organization. To the Communist, the word *party* conveys much more than candidates on a ballot: indeed, a Communist Party can function as a party in the Leninist sense without any place on the ballot. To the Leninist, a party is a tightly knit, highly disciplined corps of skilled leaders—a revolutionary vanguard before taking power and the ruling clique after taking power. What is more, to the Stalinist, the party is a world organization directed from the Soviet Union and operating under international discipline.

It is this concept that was challenged at the convention of the American Communist Party and everyone of the sophisticated party veterans understood it. The outcome was indecisive. The party decided to continue as a "party," but the "party" is deeply divided. For the time being, it will not—as in the past—merely echo sounds from the Kremlin. But how freely it will use its own voice to oppose Soviet policies we cannot say.

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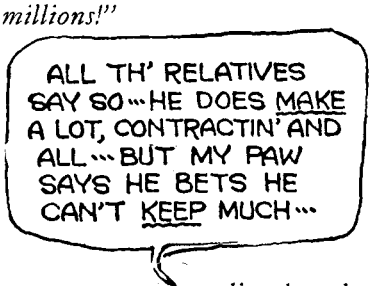
Little Orphan Annie

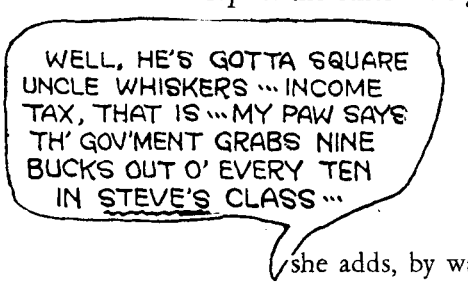
WE BEGIN to believe that the men who produce the country's comic strips, already acclaimed in some quarters as serious artists, are bent on making still greater contributions to American culture. The recent trend, if trend it is, began with Mr. Al Capp, the creator of "Li'l Abner," who turned up at the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, D. C., on February 7, to deliver an address on modern art.

Unhindered in his discourse by anything so burdensome as knowledge, Mr. Capp was quick to arrive at his essential point: that modern art is the "revelation of disordered minds." The *genuine* art created today, he went on, is the art of the auto ads, the fashion magazines, and the comic strips.

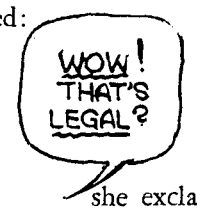
A few days after Mr. Capp's address we had occasion to light a fire and, finding no Picassos on hand for kindling, we made furtive use, and blush to admit it, of the Sunday comics section for that purpose, and so discovered, quite by accident, that still another panel artist has taken a flyer into realms of speculative thought. The strip that caught our eye was Mr. Harold Gray's creation, "Little Orphan Annie." Mr. Gray's discourse, presented in the manner of a philosophic dialogue between Annie and another little girl, concerned itself with economic questions; specifically, the income tax. Annie opens the discussion with a remark that a third character, named Cousin Steve, "must be worth *millions!*"



replies the other little girl, and then . . .


WELL, HE'S GOTTA SQUARE UNCLE WHISKERS ··· INCOME TAX, THAT IS ··· MY PAW SAYS TH' GOV'MENT GRABS NINE BUCKS OUT O' EVERY TEN IN STEVE'S CLASS ···

she adds, by way of explanation. Annie is flabbergasted:



she exclaims, incredulously. Yes, Annie, it's quite legal.

There are some psychologists who believe that sadistic comics may exert sufficient influence on children to incline them to deeds of violence. If they are correct in their general theory of the effect of comics on the young, it will be interesting to see what happens when today's children, trained in Poujadisme by Little Orphan Annie, attain to the age of reason and a taxable income.

The China Taboo

WHEN he cried "blackmail" to justify his ban on the entry of US newsmen to Communist China, Secretary Dulles defended his position by arguing that "the bodies of American citizens ought not to be made a subject for that kind of barter." But as the Administration's staunch supporter the *New York Herald-Tribune* replied, "a free press is not a subject for barter, any more than 'the bodies of American citizens'."

The press has challenged Dulles' right to lift the passports of newsmen who travel to China, but its challenge has been mild indeed considering that it is the freedom of the press itself which is at stake. Nor have more than a handful of members of Congress, all Democrats, taken issue with the Dulles ban, and of these only Senators Hennings (D, Mo.) and Humphrey (D, Minn.) have threatened resort to the investigatory powers of Congress. If legislators whose task is to guard against Executive usurpations are silent, Mr. Dulles cannot be solely blamed for the impasse of which he has become the symbol. The blame attaches to us all—to our national timidity and refusal to confront the broad fact of Communist China's rise to power in Asia—a fact which cannot be wished away, and which six experts (*NR*, Jan. 14), independently of each other, predicted would present the single greatest challenge to US diplomacy in the decade ahead.

As Harold Isaacs writes in this issue, the entry of US newsmen to China will not accomplish miracles. For if the admission of American journalists is to serve its purpose, which is to turn on the tap of facts so that US public opinion can be better informed, "the quality of the reporting will have to be better," writes Isaacs, "much better than it ever was before." No longer can we safely rely on newsmen who mumble the pidgin-English of the old China Hand. Linguistic competence both in the written and the spoken tongue will count even more in China than it does in other countries with cultural patterns markedly different from our own. Moreover, Isaacs shows that since the Communist takeover US images of China have changed to "images of pain and fear." Thus, even if the veil of mystery over China is lifted, we cannot expect American public opinion to adjust rapidly to the facts as given. For a long while to come, any Administration which tries to deal realistically with China will find itself on the barricades fighting for its life against attacks from within the US.

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"Today's images, caught from afar in darkened and curved mirrors, are almost all images of pain and fear."

How We "See" the Chinese Communists

by HAROLD R. ISAACS

WHAT WE GET to read and know about Communist China has become a major issue between the press and the State Department. For seven years it was Mao's regime which barred US reporters from China. Now it is our own government. What images have we acquired of Communist China during this period of near-total news blackout? How has the new order in China altered older American images of the Chinese? How do we "see" the Chinese now?

Harold R. Isaacs attempts to answer these questions in this adaptation from his forthcoming book, *Scratches On Our Minds,* scheduled for publication this year. Former associate editor of *Newsweek,* author of *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* and *No Peace for Asia,* Isaacs has reported on Asian affairs for 25 years. He is now on the staff of the Center for International Studies at MIT. His study, which unites the techniques of scholarship and journalism, is the product of two years of interviews with 200 Americans in government, business, universities, mass media and the churches. Mr. Isaacs' object was to discover their images both of China and the Chinese, and India and the Indians.

We believe that Mr. Isaacs' findings provide an appropriate preface to any discussion of the implications of our severance of contact with China. In a coming issue, we shall publish an analysis by William Worthy, the reporter who defied the State Department ban on entering China and has since refused to surrender his passport, on the problems and opportunities confronted by a US newsman attempting to cover China today.

EVERY TIME during the last 50 years or so that the sleeping Chinese dragon flicked its tail, some American watchers were sure that it was at last coming awake. When the Communists took power in China in 1949, the event so often foretold finally came to pass, and despite all the foretelling, it came as a rude shock. The monster awakened bore only the most coincidental resemblance to the monster asleep. Opening his red eyes, rising into motion, breathing fire, he has completely altered the lights and shadows in which he was previously seen. He is not delicate or subtle now, but tough and crude, not torpid but driving, not passive or yielding, but aggressive and unmanageable.

Like the Celestial Kingdom of 150 years ago, China is sealed off, at least from Americans. Its rulers once more require the kowtow or its equivalent; only the obeisant bringing tribute are welcomed to the Forbidden City. It is again a power that arouses hostility and also, again after many generations, a measure of respect. None of the habitual American postures of the inter-

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vening decades quite meets the new situation, neither lordly contempt, patronizing affection, sentimental admiration, avuncular kindness, or parental solicitude. New postures must be assumed and this is causing considerable dislocation, some of it quite painful.

The dislocation is physical, to begin with. At the end of 1956 there were, as far as we definitely know, only 27 Americans in China—10 of them in prison—compared to 13,300 in 1937, the last "peacetime" year. American writing about China, such a massive flow only a few years ago, has dried up to the merest trickle. Newsmen and scholars alike could work only from culling second-hand materials, printed or monitored from the air. Americans could still meet Chinese in Hong Kong and Formosa, but the severance between Americans and Chinese in China was nearly total. It was more complete than any that ever occurred between the United States and Russia at any time—more complete, indeed, than has ever occurred between the United States and any country of importance except in time of war.

One major effect of this total severance of contact is that only the larger images of "China" or "Red China" are visible at all, and these are almost all now fearful images. I am not suggesting that our past more intimate knowledge of China was a great deal better than our present ignorance, but it was varied and valid, at least, in terms of the experience of many Americans through whom we received it—and it produced, in the main, a friendly, sympathetic, and even admiring attitude toward the Chinese as people, if not always toward their governments. Today's images, caught from afar in darkened and curved mirrors, are almost all images of pain and fear. The peculiar anguish caused to so many Americans by the "loss" of China was more than the product of rejected parentalism. China had not merely strayed and become a delinquent. It had become part of the new Soviet power system; and in the same season that China fell to the Communists, Russia exploded its first bomb and became something new in the American cosmos: a foe to be feared. Less than a year later, an American army in Korea was stunningly and unexpectedly smashed by a Chinese army that had crossed the Yalu and waited in perfect concealment. Almost overnight, the Chinese were transformed from scorned and patronized weaklings into a formidable enemy. In this new role they contributed heavily to the atmosphere so hospitable to the spasms of fear and frustration that shook American public life in the early 1950's.

Infantry of the "People's Liberation Army."

The popular image of "the Chinese people" began to change. The vague but nearly universal esteem for the Chinese—so largely the product of missionary views, Pearl Buck, and the war against Japan—could not stand up for long against the new and hostile environment. There are fragments of opinion poll evidence to suggest that it has begun to give way. It was clear in many of our interviews that all the qualities attributed to the "evil and untrustworthy Oriental" tend to come into their own in this new setting, readily attaching themselves to the new images, of which one of the most powerful, for example, is that of the "brainwasher." We still have only fragments of information about Chinese "brainwashing," but it is already quite clear that the special Chinese capacity for using these weapons of mental and emotional torture will far outstrip anything ever attributed to the Russians by way of explaining the "confessions" of the Stalin purge era. For the Chinese there is a whole battery of qualities, long attributed to them in the past, to help "explain" this phenomenon: inhuman cruelty, inscrutability, deviousness, subtlety, devilish cleverness. There are signs, indeed, that in the shadow of these new images and the somber realities they reflect, that the older figure of the "evil and untrustworthy Oriental" has become ridiculous. Recent attempts to revive Fu Manchu on TV appear to have flopped badly. The new Chinese images have already far outraced the plodding fantasies of the past.

Perhaps the most common and pervasive of the reactions in our panel to Communist China have to do with a sense of *released energy*. Great vitality, always mentioned as a trait possessed by Chinese in unusual degree, has now been generalized for the nation as a whole. The effect is powerful and, for some, quite overwhelming. Some examples:

> A civilization bottled up for a long time, corroded by the West, now bursting forth with tremendous energy. This had to come. The Communists are merely riding the crest. . . .
>
> A country of 600 million, going to be a tremendous force in the world, with a welded leadership, public health, mass ideas, technology, terrific potential for change. There is little we can do to alter it.

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Or a growing apprehension, as in these remarks of a former high government official:

> I feel apprehension, a great deal of apprehension, the feeling that the whole pattern of inferiority has disappeared. They've got resources and Communist ideology, and a foreign policy based on their tradition of expansion. It creates a major danger for the United States . . .

Or, again, from a businessman:

> Tremendous potential in unharnessed power. Gives you the creeps to think what happens when it gets harnessed the wrong way, as now . . . .

The awakened giant is still only half on his feet, but he already looks a lot bigger than he did prone. When, in the mind's eye of some of our panelists, he rises to his full height and starts throwing his great weight around, his new dimensions become, as we have observed before, apocalyptic:

> We have to build dikes somehow. Chinese power in the next hundred years will absorb all of Southeast Asia. There will be no stopping them . . .
>
> I think of a solid Communist bloc from Germany to the Pacific. Fear is an honest word . . . .

A prominent politician who was born in the South has this characteristic reaction:

> Is China going to take the lead in fomenting feeling against the white race? . . . America is much more afraid of Chinese Communism than of Russian Communism and I think even Russia is beginning to fear that side more than its Western borders. . . . China is a rising country with tremendous strength, great potential . . . a people with dark skins who have been exploited . . . .

A career diplomat:

> In 30 years China will be a tremendous danger to the Orient if other countries do not keep up with Chinese advances. Like the danger of Japan, a physical, imperialist danger, and to the United States too insofar as any expanding imperialistic power blocks the United States in. They will try to dominate South Asia and Australia if they can. This is inevitable. . . .

This great sense of energies released in China is, let it be quite clear, no matter merely of image or imagination. This is a "large" image which is verified by "large" facts that almost everybody can see, even from a great distance, and these facts are, according to your disposition, impressive, overwhelming, or frightening.

The fact is that although these changes have barely begun and it is still an industrial pygmy compared to the US and USSR, China under the Communists has already become in effect a major world power in its own right. Russia has remained by sheer weight of its steel the center of power in the Communist world, but the mantle of status and prestige within that world has already shifted from the Kremlin to the men who now sit under the golden titles of Peking's Forbidden City. This displacement of power along the Moscow-Peking axis is still nascent and tentative, but it became obvious enough in the last few months to make it certain that in Moscow, too, images of the Chinese must be undergoing large and meaningful changes.

The Chinese as Warrior

Around the sleeping giant a whole conception was woven: philosophic calm and patience, timelessness, immobility, an intelligence too great for combativeness or truculence, a genius for achieving ends not by bruising direct action but by smooth circumlocution, a wisdom too weary with years to accept the angry haste and short-lived violences of Western man. The giant shredded this gossamer web as he rose, full now of his own haste, crudity, violence, impatience, and aggressive self-assertion. Now he is dangerously vital, vigorous, energetic, bursting out at all his seams. Of all the shifts and displacements this requires in our mental picture of the Chinese, none is more radical or sweeping than the changes in our image of China as a military power and of the Chinese as a warrior.

These changes have been in the making for some time. They were already visible in American estimates of the Communist armies during the war with Japan. They were spurred by the events of the Communist takeover in China in 1948-1949. But they really came into their own in American minds as a result of what happened after the Chinese intervened in the Korean War in the winter of 1950. Some vivid examples of how individuals experienced this change turned up in several interviews. A Congressman said:

> I could not visualize the Oriental as a terrific, rugged, capable soldier. It was first brought home to me in Korea in 1951. Iron Mike O'Daniel told me the Chinese army was as well staffed and trained as any he knew. . . . Seemed strange for Chinamen, went against the whole idea I'd ever had of the Chinese. . . . I knew a streak of cruelty was there, but couldn't quite see them as the terrible, tenacious soldiers they turned out to be . . . .

One of the country's best-known newsmen:

> They have limitless manpower and from my experience in Korea, a technical skill far in excess of what Americans ever thought possible. The Chinese were better artillery-men than the Germans ever were. This was quite a shock, considering one's previous picture. I remember a sergeant who said to me: "We thought all we had to do was show them our uniforms, and they would run like hell. Instead they shot the ..... out of us." With some allowance for exaggeration, this was my experience too.

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Or this, finally, from a former high official of the Eisenhower Administration:

> I was brought up to think the Chinese couldn't handle a machine. Now, suddenly, the Chinese are flying jets! The American idea was that Asiatics are non-mechanical, except the Japanese, and the Japanese were freaks, not really mechanical, just copied what others did. In practically everything one ever read . . . the Asiatic is always plowing with his fingernails and the European is handling the machine. Now the Chinese is flying a jet! Disturbing, especially since you have several hundred million of them teamed up with the USSR. I always thought the Yellow Peril business was nonsense. . . . Now I can visualize that Asiatics teamed up with the Slavs could indeed conquer the world!

It required an experience as jolting as that in Korea to introduce these new images of the Chinese as warriors, for the contrary images of the Chinese as unaggressive, non-mechanical, and un-martial, are among the oldest and most deeply imbedded in our entire gallery. Indeed, to find almost any generalized image of the Chinese as dangerous fighting men, one has to go all the way back to their non-Chinese antecedents and one-time conquerors, the Mongol Hordes of Genghis Khan, who overran so much of the known world in the 12th Century. The encounter with the Chinese army in Korea, "human sea" and all, in a way signaled another sort of rounding of the circle: our images of the Chinese as warriors had progressed from fearful hordes to fearful hordes in seven centuries.

Genghis Khan (1167-1227)

The Mongol Hordes

The idea of the Mongol hordes has never lurked very far from the more generalized images of "Asiatic" or "Oriental" barbarism. It might lie dormant for long periods, but it is summoned up at a touch, instantly revived by some evidence of wanton cruelty or by some particularly fearful event. A crowded panoply of images and sensations seemingly waits in almost every Western man's mind, ready to move at the cue.

The most recent and perhaps the most mordantly ironic example of this occurred in the report of a refugee from the Russian repression of the Hungarian revolt in November, 1956. He said that Russian soldiers in Budapest had "refused to fight us" but finally had been "terrorized" into turning their guns against the rebels after the Soviet Union "had sent in new and tougher troops, including two Mongolian divisions." The Mongols had "terrorized" the Russians, and the wanton slaughter began.

During a time of severe tension in the Formosa Strait in 1955, when the threat of an American war with Communist China was strong in people's minds, I heard a White House official at a Washington dinner suddenly summon up this same ancestral specter. The discussion made him think, he said, of a fantastic story he had once read. It was called "The Red Napoleon," written by the sensationalist Floyd Gibbons for the Hearst press in 1929. Nightmarishly illustrated—mainly with the ravished bodies of white women—it had depicted the rise of a new Genghis Khan somewhere in Communist Asia. At the head of a new Mongol barbarian horde, this new Khan was depicted as coming close to conquering the world in a war which Gibbons imagined as taking place between 1933 and 1938. This lurid tale had made a deep and permanent scratch on this one person's mind, who could not have been much more than 16 at the time and found himself now a member of a President's staff.

Between our images of the barbarian hordes of the 12th and 13th Centuries, and the rise of the successor hordes and their successor images in the 20th, a wholly different set of notions intervened about the Chinese as warriors. These quite contrary ideas have dominated all but the most recent history linking Americans and Chinese. One of the best-known of these was based on the fact that traditional Chinese society put a low value on the soldier. This tradition was, like many others in Chinese life, more formal than real. But it was real enough to form one of the many differences between Chinese ideas and the rougher-and-readier canons of European—or especially of Anglo-Saxon—culture. It helped create

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the contempt in which dominant Westerners came to hold the Chinese after they found they could defeat them so easily in war.

A corollary and more familiar image associated with more recent times was definitely comic in its impact: the image of the comic opera Chinese soldier of the warlord era, roughly the decades between 1912 and 1937. This was the Chinese soldier carrying an umbrella and a token rifle, the era of the armies that fought battles across teacups, of victories won by "silver bullets"—*i.e.,* through the judicious purchase of treason in the camp of the foe or by compromise arrangements to live and let live. The Chinese soldier and his warlord master became in this time the butt of a good deal of scornful humor in the foreign press. Of this humor Major (now Brigadier General, retired) Thomas Magruder wrote in 1931:

> Insofar as this humor expresses the essential non-martial character of the soldiers, it is an accurate reflection of the facts. . . . By nature the Chinese have never been and are not now a warlike people . . . they have developed no scientific military traditions. . . .

Hanson Baldwin, writing in 1951, in a direct commentary on the Magruder article, found it necessary to say:

> That the world no longer thinks of the Chinese in terms of pacifism is a measure of the change in China. . . . The picture we once entertained of the somewhat benign, inscrutable but wise and civilized Chinese, too intelligent for war—an oversimplified caricature 20 years ago—has even less validity today. For the future China is in the hands of peasant stock, of patient men who have shown on many battlefields that they *will fight.* We have learned this, somewhat to our surprise and at heavy cost, in Korea.

Between the unsoldierly soldier of Major Magruder's day and the fighting men encountered in Korea, several transitional figures passed. The comic opera Chinese soldier disappeared forever in the bloody abysses of the Japanese war. In his place came the popular picture of the heroic defender of his land (1937-1943), and after that the brave and hardy but hapless victim of the corruption and ineptitude of his leaders (1944-1949). The collapse of Chiang Kai-shek's armies before the Communists in 1948-1949 confirmed the picture Americans already had of an amorphous, buttery mass, incapable of functioning effectively, too ridden by backwardness and dishonesty, unable to make good use of modern weapons and techniques. Such was the final military judgment offered from the field by the General commanding the United States Advisory Group in 1948:

> No battle has been lost since my arrival due to lack of ammunition or other factors. Their military debacles in my opinion can all be attributed to the world's worst leadership and many other morale-destroying factors that lead to a complete loss of the will to fight [and] complete ineptness throughout the Armed Forces. . . .

Of the Communist armies, some American military men had begun to acquire a more respectful picture, both during the war against Japan and the civil war that followed. But the difference did not impress itself deep or far. The real displacement of American images of the Chinese as warriors did not take place until Americans faced Chinese as foes in Korea.

"The Human Sea"

In October, 1950, American Eighth Army intelligence officers in Korea reported the appearance of Chinese units along the North Korean front. The military historian S. L. A. Marshall has written that these reports were regarded with considerable concern by officers on the ground. But we still have no clear picture of how these reports were received and evaluated as they rose along the echelons to the top command. We do not know if they were ignored, or under-estimated, or scornfully rejected. We do not know whether the presence of a large Chinese army was doubted or whether the decision-makers, like the sergeant quoted by one of our panelists, thought that "all we had to do was show them our uniforms and they would run like hell." The fact is that Gen. Douglas MacArthur did not regard these reports as a deterrent to his planned action. He went ahead on November 24 with his famous "home-by-Christmas" offensive. When the American troops came staggering back from the impact of the Chinese armies that so unexpectedly struck them, a whole epoch passed and a swift and massive displacement of images had taken place.

Chinese soldiery, hitherto always seen as pulpy and ineffectual, had suddenly become a powerfully threatening foe. The picture was one of a small American and allied force being engulfed by a vast Chinese army which had concealed itself with a skill at deception that was, in Col. Marshall's words, "suited to the Oriental nature." The effect was a pellmell retreat in pellmell disorder. The new realities of that battlefield were grim enough, but they were swiftly compounded by the old, old mythologies that lay so readily to hand, all the nameless fears implied by Col. Marshall's description of an American force being "swamped by a *yellow tide* which moved upon it from all sides." "The yellow tide" in Korea swept up all sorts of ancestral memories. The "new" images were built up swiftly, not only out of the reality of the new foe, but out of materials that had lain long in the recesses of time and the mind. The Mongol hordes had reappeared.

The first and principal ingredient of this "new" image of the Chinese was the idea of their numbers, their sheer vast numbers. ("The Chinese Communist army . . . combat effectiveness was limited to the tactic of the 'human sea'," wrote Gen. Mark Clark, "because all it had initially was an overwhelming superiority in numbers of men. . . . The enemy hurled overwhelming numbers of

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men at us, apparently heedless of how many he lost.")

This indifference to life and death is a second dominating aspect of the new set of images. ("It is well to remember," wrote Hanson Baldwin, "that the Chinese soldier springs from a land where life is cheap. . . . [He] is fatalistic, with little regard for human life.") Necessarily coupled to this was a special quality of cruel sadism. ("There is a sadism and brutality inherent in many Asiatics," observed Lt. Col. Robert B. Rigg, formerly Assistant Military Attache to Nationalist China, "that is not commonly found within men of the better educated areas of the world." This special brutality is being spread, he went on, "to countless masses of uniformed robots.")

A third ingredient is described variously as "blind obedience" or "stupid automatism" or "iron discipline" —the quality that made it possible for Chinese soldiers to act with suicidal madness, like marching squarely into the face of murderous fire until ordered to stop. Marshall quotes one officer as saying: "It was like dealing with mass lunacy." Baldwin notes that this behavior led to the popular notion, which he adds he could never verify, that Chinese soldiers were "hopped up with opium" before going into action.

As I will show in my full report, these all derived from older and quite well-established images, assigned in the more recent past to the Japanese and restored here once more to the Chinese. Here again, on Korean battlefields, were the *faceless masses,* the *cruel and nerveless subhumans,* the *incomprehensible* and the *inscrutable* Chinese whom we have met before in other times and places, reappearing out of obscurity to stand again in the foreground of the imagination to help "explain" the main picture we have of this phase of the Korean War, a picture of an overwhelming mass overcoming by "human sea assaults" the technically-superior but numerically-inferior American foe.

Marshal Chu Teh of the Red Chinese Army

As fact and as phrase, "the human sea" experience in the Korean War is a subject for an inquiry in itself. As phrase, it became part of the daily jargon of war reporting, *e.g.*:

> Attacking in a "human sea" offensive, the enemy infantry had rolled forward eighteen to twenty miles . . . in the traditional pattern of the Korean War, matched sheer manpower of infantry armed with rifles and machine guns against the mechanized Allied army.

As described in a *Saturday Evening Post* article:

> The "human sea assault" is a most wasteful but effective device. . . . In this limitless resource of expendable manpower lies the Chinese Red Army's strength. Squads, platoons, and companies are organized into the much publicized assault units. Each unit flings itself into battle at the command "Charge!" The men in these rushes keep going until they are cut down by the enemy or gain the objective.

What was the "human sea" as fact? This appears to be more difficult to answer. In the literal sense of onrushing charges of seemingly insane men dying in droves until they had over-run their objective, how often did it actually happen? Many of the contemporary reports seemed to suggest that it was happening all the time. But Andrew Geer, the Marine historian, writing in 1952, enters a sharp dissent:

> "Human sea" frontal assaults are rare and are ordered as a last resort when the necessity for victory dictates such a high cost. Newspapers have reported "human sea" attacks on United Nations positions on many occasions. Actually there have been few such attacks made by the Chinese forces in Korea. Such tactics were reported as an excuse for the defeat suffered by United Nations troops.

Did it come to be used more loosely, to describe, say, the infiltration tactics which the Chinese used so skillfully, or even, most simply, to describe the larger number of enemy troops in almost any operation? Did the phrase, "human sea" come to have a life of its own? Did operations officers, communique writers, correspondents, editors, and headline writers add, through this phrase, their own mental images of what was going on? Did the phrase help evoke the strong sense of difference between one's own side and those fantastic masses of *gooks* or *chinks,* subhumans, indifferent alike in killing or in dying? Did it help rationalize later, in the counter-offensives which finally deadlocked the war, the so-called "operation killer"—the concerted design for the most massive possible killing of this innumerable, inexhaustible foe?

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But before the Korean War ended, the new image of the Chinese as warriors and foes became something more than a vision of vast numbers, of massed barbarians kin to the Mongol hordes. These were Mongol hordes with big guns and jet aircraft and a growing number among them who knew how to use these weapons with considerable precision and skill. A new conception arose not only of the Chinese as warriors but the Chinese as technicians. These were only yesterday backward semi-idiots who knew only how to kill or die, people of an unindustrialized country not at home with complicated machinery, ingenious but essentially "not mechanical-minded." But in Korea they began, as we have already heard, to impress some Americans as "better artillerymen than the Germans" and soon after the Korean War ended were being held responsible for the superior technical showing of Ho Chi Minh's Communist forces at the siege of Dienbienphu in the climactic battle of the Indo-China War. On April 5, 1954, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles read to a Congressional committee a top United States intelligence report which he called an "ominous story." It recited these six points:

> 1. A Chinese Communist general is stationed at the Dienbienphu headquarters . . . of the Vietminh commander.
>
> 2. Under him there are nearly a score of Chinese Communist technical military advisers . . . [and] numerous others at division level.
>
> 3. There are special telephone lines installed, maintained and operated by Chinese personnel.
>
> 4. There are . . . .37mm anti-aircraft guns, radar controlled, at Dienbienphu which are shooting through the clouds to bring down French aircraft. These guns are operated by Chinese.
>
> 5. . . . There are approximately 1,000 supply trucks . . . all driven by Chinese army personnel.
>
> 6. . . . the artillery, ammunition and equipment generally comes from Communist China.

The enormity and irony of the change implied by the tone of this report becomes most apparent when we compare it to the despair with which American military men had regarded the Chinese army barely a decade before. Then it was the Americans who were the technical advisers, Americans who set up and operated communications systems, Americans who threw up their hands at the way Chinese artillerymen handled their .37mm guns, and the way Chinese drivers abused the trucks they had been given to drive.

This transformation of the Chinese from a non-warlike to a highly warlike people and of China from a weakling among nations to a major power was accomplished with remarkable rapidity. General Douglas MacArthur, who had made the discovery at first hand, so to speak, told Congress on his return in 1951:

> The Chinese people have become militarized in their concepts and their ideals. They now constitute excellent soldiers, with competent staffs and commanders. This has produced a new and dominant power in Asia. . . .

National Day celebration in Peking, October 1, 1955

Early in 1956 Colonel W. Bruce Pirnie predicted to a Boston audience: "The Chinese Communist army will be the world's most dynamic fighting machine by 1970," so much so that by that time the survival of the United States will "be in doubt."

In our present panel, the sense of this transformation of image is strong. The quality of it is but suggested, perhaps, by the words and tone of a Midwestern publisher:

> I never thought of the Chinese as belligerent. I never thought we would be risking war with them. A peasant country! It would have been inconceivable to me even five or ten years ago that we could have a war with China. Now I see China as a formidable foe . . .

From this picture the friendly, attractive, admirable individual Chinese has almost completely disappeared. The shape of our new images waits in part, on the shape of things to come, and in part on the resumption of contact.

We will be spared gross distortion in these new images, we will be helped to maintain some sense of proportion and to keep in closer touch with the reality on the ground, if we can regain direct contact with China and the Chinese and thereby regain the opportunity to observe directly what is going on. But the quality of the reporting will have to be better, much better than it ever was before. It will have to be done by reporters who can speak and, preferably, read Chinese, and by reporters with the knowledge and sophistication to recognize the impressiveness of the totalitarian achievement while breaking through to the human realities behind the totalitarian façade.

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Who Are The Intellectuals?

by MALCOLM COWLEY

EVERYBODY talks about the intellectuals, about their plight, about their usefulness to society, or, on the conservative side, about the threat they offer to sound government. The word itself, or the vague concept for which it stands, is so much used that it has spawned dozens of mostly contemptuous synonyms, including eggheads, longhairs, owleyes, mortarboards, doubledomes, do-gooders, pinkos and professors. There are also honorific synonyms, used by the intellectuals themselves and often taking the form of periphrastic expressions like "every intelligent reader" and "anyone who has given thought to the question." Meanwhile there has been no satisfactory definition of the group or community to which a term like "the intellectuals" can properly be applied.

Sometimes the term is used to describe a narrowly selected group of shifting membership, a sort of honorary society. Sometimes the group is larger and seems to include almost any member of the liberal professions, but especially writers and scholars. Sometimes an author talks about both groups in the same context without realizing that he has shifted from one to the other. That would be my first though not my only criticism of H. Stuart Hughes' generally useful and hard-headed article in a recent issue of *Commentary*, "Is the Intellectual Obsolete?"

Mr. Hughes' answer to his own question is equivocal. He thinks that in a highly-developed industrial society like ours there is great need for what he calls "mental technicians"—doctors, lawyers, administrators, teachers, all types of engineers—but that there is much less demand for the freely speculating intelligence. "The range of such speculation has been drastically reduced," he says, and "a vast number of questions that used to be hotly debated have now passed outside the sphere of relevant controversy. We are living in a society and in an era where there is scope for comparatively few intellectuals." There is, however, scope for some of them, Mr. Hughes concedes without telling us what they are expected to do. The intellectual is not entirely obsolete, but having been robbed of both his historic functions—"as the ideological bulwark of society and as its utopian critic"—he faces a dubious future.

I rather suspect that the reason why Mr. Hughes is so pessimistic about the present role of the intellectual is that he is entirely too optimistic about the present ability of our society to solve its problems in a technical fashion, purely by engineering and without philosophy. That is the unstated premise of his article. But before coming back to it I should like to observe that his argument is weakened by a degree of vagueness or confusion about who the intellectuals are. At the beginning he seems to be defining them in an honorific sense as all those who have "freely speculating minds." By his last page, however, he is using the word intellectual in an occupational sense, as it is used in Central Europe; at least he talks about "the position of writers and scholars" as if they were the intellectuals under discussion. Anyone could tell him—but I don't think he needs to be told—that only one or two scholars out of 50, and at most one writer out of 10, can be said to possess a freely speculating mind.

I SHOULD like to hazard another definition of the term, as a step toward further discussion and perhaps research. American intellectuals, we might say, are an order of persons chiefly within the professional class, distinguished from other members of that class not by socio-economic status, and not always by their training or level of intelligence, but predominantly by a special *attitude*. They are persons open to ideas, more or less accustomed to dealing with ideas, who believe that society can be improved by finding the right ideas and putting them into practice.

Since American intellectuals are defined by attitude rather than status, they would be harder to enumerate than the intellectuals of Central and Eastern Europe —and harder too than those of England, where the intellectuals might be defined as the audience of the BBC Third Program, or even as a smaller group, the readers of the *New Statesman and Nation*. In the United States the intellectuals have no radio program (except in the San Francisco Bay area), and no magazine that reaches even a fourth of them (though I hope that some day *The New Republic* will reach them all). Still they form a sort of community, and there are quite practical tests by which they can be distinguished from the rest of the population.

For many years now the social psychologists have been working on the problem of identifying types of personality and groups of persons connected with many different attitudes. In particular they have done interesting work with the authoritarian personality and with what

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MALCOLM COWLEY, *former literary editor of* The New Republic, *the author of* Exile's Return *and other books of criticism.*

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they call anomie, sometimes defined as a state of indifference resulting from blank discouragement. The intellectuals would be easier to identify, since they associate with others of their type and engage in common activities. The means of identification would be a questionnaire, as always. Among the obvious questions might be some of the following:

> What are your degrees, from which colleges or universities?
>
> Whom did you vote for in the last two Presidential elections?
>
> Do you often read any of the following magazines? (With a list appended.)
>
> If you drive a car, what is the make and how old is it?
>
> Do you spend much time looking at TV?
>
> Do you believe that the United States should continue testing hydrogen bombs?
>
> Which of these attitudes toward racial segregation is closest to your own? (With an appended choice of opinions.)

The social psychologist in charge of the project would have a list of typically intellectual answers to the questions, and these would be used in grading papers. But the passing grade would be 70 or 80, not 90 or 100, for intellectuals differ among themselves on every conceivable issue. Once I thought there were a few safe generalities, like "No intellectual wears a double-breasted jacket," when these were fashionable, and "No intellectual drives a new Pontiac," but then I found exceptions to both rules.

One feature of questionnaires is that they reveal, or rather confirm, what we knew before the answers came in. The questionnaire to intellectuals would be likely to show that they are scattered through most of the occupations by which Americans earn their livings; there are even a few intellectual salesmen, West Point and Annapolis officers, real-estate dealers, and investment bankers. There are some intellectual farmers, in Florida and California, and in New York there are intellectual taxicab drivers and short-order cooks. On the other hand, not many intellectuals would now be found in government service, where there used to be thousands. The present concentration is in teaching (chiefly in colleges of the liberal arts) and in a few specialized occupations like book publishing and writing non-fiction. Critics probably come as close as any group to being intellectuals by profession.

In American society as a whole, the intellectuals are a very small minority, and they often complain of being a disregarded and oppressed minority, almost like East European Gypsies. It is true that they have no voice in local government, except in a few university towns, and that their latest candidate for the Presidency was beaten by a larger majority than anyone else since Alfred M. Landon. But they nominated the candidate, and that in itself is evidence of some political power. The nominating campaign was decided by the California primary, and that in turn was largely decided by the hard work of California intellectuals.

Of course their principal influence is exercised not on election day, but over a period of years, and often through policies adopted by the executive branch of the government. Mr. Hoover in 1930 was applying, with a notable lack of relevance, ideas he had learned in his youth through reading Herbert Spencer or listening to his disciples. In 1934 Roosevelt's lieutenants were more successful in applying the ideas of John Maynard Keynes, which, after 20 years, have also been accepted by many of the leading Republicans. The intellectual commonplaces of one generation become the political commonplaces of another.

Still further researches by social psychologists might show that there is a division of functions in the intellectual community, besides the division of opinions that has been mentioned. There are those in the community who expound or combine or, in rare cases, originate ideas, and there are those who willingly listen, discriminate among ideas, and try to act on the best of them.

NOTE that the two roles may be exchanged. Professor Smith, who has been suggesting a new American policy in the Middle East, steps down from the platform and listens while Professor Robinson expounds the Dead Sea Scrolls; then Robinson listens in turn while Professor Braun develops a new theory of city planning. Yet there are always spokesmen facing an audience, and the two functions have to be distinguished. It is a serious mistake, however, to believe that the only true intellectuals are the spokesmen, since the audience also has a creative part to play. If there were no one to hear or read or respond to them, the spokesmen would soon stop talking. If they found they were being misunderstood, they would raise their voices and talk in a more elementary fashion. At any moment the American level of ideas is more or less determined by the level of discussion that prevails in the whole intellectual community.

Within the order of spokesmen there is another distinction to be made. There are those who expound ideas, or administer a policy based on ideas, or amass the body of facts with which ideas can be verified; and there are the others, a much smaller group, who work to find new combinations of ideas and, on occasion, new ideas that others can apply. Members of the first group are among those whom Mr. Hughes would call "mental technicians," but the term should not be used opprobriously, for often they are superbly trained and indispensable technicians. Often too they receive a substantial part of their intellectual freedom in assuming responsibilities. It is only the members of the smaller

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second group who are committed to the cultivation of what Mr. Hughes calls the freely speculating mind.

The point that impresses me is how few intellectuals there are in the United States today, if we take the word in this narrower meaning. There are millions of intellectuals in the occupational or East European sense of members of the liberal professions. There are a few hundred thousand in what I have tried to define as the intellectual audience. There are thousands of serious scholars and intellectual administrators—but how many are there who, through most of their careers, have devoted themselves to speculative thinking and have produced results of any public value?

How many are there who correspond to the 18th Century philosophers, the Renaissance scholars, or the Greek lovers of wisdom? Almost any of us could make a list of such men. My own list would have not more than 20 names, including those of Edmund Wilson, Lewis Mumford, Kenneth Burke, Walter Lippmann, Robert Oppenheimer, Henry A. Murray, Reinhold Niebuhr, Crane Brinton, and perhaps a dozen others. There would be different names on other lists, but I suspect that all the names could be numbered in the scores; perhaps there would be a few more than a hundred.

Obviously we are dealing here with too small a group for social generalizations. What shall we say of a category of persons that includes journalists, historians, scientists, social scientists, theologians, and perhaps, though I haven't mentioned their names, two or three doctors and jurists, all marked by a certain freedom and breadth of speculation? At most we might compare them with similar groups at other periods. Fifty years ago, to choose a date, the similar group in this country would have included William James, Henry Adams, Veblen, Dewey, Santayana, Breasted, Turner, Steffens, John Jay Chapman, Lester F. Ward and Graham Sumner. I omit the names of Beard and Boas, because their influential work was still to come, but in 1907 Justice Holmes was writing his dissenting opinions, and Woodrow Wilson, another speculative thinker, was president of Princeton.

Without disparaging the present groups, all of whose members I admire in different fashions, I feel that they are narrower in scope than their predecessors, more compartmented in their specialties. And what shall we say when we compare these present American thinkers with Europeans of the 19th Century—with Hegel, Marx, Darwin, Mill, Spencer (for all his shortcomings), Nietzsche and Bergson; with any of the intellectual giants who asserted a new attitude toward human institutions or tried to deal comprehensively with the past and the future? Today our speculative thinkers have not only decreased in number but appear to have shrunk in ambition and curiosity.

We live in the ruins of great systems—Marxism, Freudianism, Social Darwinism, old-fashioned liberalism—not one of which has remained standing as a whole, though all have left heaps of building stones. Out of the stones we make our cottages, much as Italian shepherds of the 18th Century were pictured as dwelling in hovels among the ruins that lined the Appian Way. I speak of the intellectuals in general, but for our few speculative thinkers one would have to find another metaphor. Each of them chooses a little group of building stones and works over them devotedly; some carve elaborate small figures; others crush the stones and analyze the dust; still others combine them into new edifices with more or less imposing façades but in which something is lacking—perhaps a kitchen wing or a living room or windows that reveal the natural world. This is a time of analysts and psychoanalysts, not of bold synthetic thinkers.

Yet instead of their being obsolete, as Mr. Hughes seems to suspect, such thinkers are needed more today than at any other time since the Renaissance. The human situation is changing rapidly and as a whole, while our ideas are changing only at scattered points. Technology and medicine, penicillin, automation and the atom bomb, instant communication and supersonic travel over a shrunken globe, the explosive growth of population, the end of European dominion over the colored races, the closing of new frontiers almost as soon as they are opened, the depletion of natural resources (including space and privacy), the discovery of means to wipe out whole societies and perhaps mankind—all these are details of a new picture that no one seems to have enough leisure or knowledge or imagination to grasp as a whole.

With the old questions still undecided—What is the good life? What is right conduct? What is the best form of society?—we are faced with other questions for which the older philosophers have scarcely any answers, because the questions seemed irrelevant in their time, when the end of mankind could be conceived only in terms of an interplanetary collision, or Judgment Day, or a slow cooling of the sun. The questions now are simply: "Will the human race survive on this planet? What are the conditions in which it might survive? How can we comply with those conditions?" And the new role of those with freely speculating minds might be to consider the questions in the light of all our knowledge, while trying to furnish, each in his own fashion, a pattern for survival.

Next Week

"British Intellectuals on Strike"

HUGH MASSINGHAM

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BOOKS & COMMENT

One Who Quit The Daily Worker

by Abraham Brumberg

THAT the Hungarian Revolution was in fact a "counter-revolution," aimed at the restoration of capitalism or, worse, of the pre-war Horthyite regime is a view that, of course, belongs strictly to the Communist school of prevarication and demagogy. The pity of it, though is that it is a view accepted, though with some "reservations," by people who know better—at least, should be expected to know better. A good example of the latter is Isaac Deutscher. Faced with the dramatic turn of events in Eastern Europe, Deutscher has been casting about for a way to explain the brutal acts of a government which—if his earlier prognostications are to be believed—has been guiding Russia, slowly yet inexorably, into the blissful era of "democratic socialism." And "counter-revolution"—or at least elements of it—is the answer.

The Hungarian Tragedy, by Peter Fryer (London: Dennis Dobson; 5/-).

On the face of it, the charges of fascism and reaction are patently absurd. But, as Peter Wiles correctly observed "the opinion that Hungarians are fascists is so common in the West that it must be refuted." Thus far, the refutations emanated largely from liberal and socialist sources. (In fact, the more radical socialists have by now created their own myth—that of a classic proletarian revolution. Given the dearth of honest-to-goodness proletarian revolutions over the last few decades, this particular brand of wishful thinking can be easily understood). Aside from newspaper reports, there have been excellent pieces of reportage in various Western periodicals, written by the numerous correspondents who either happened to be in Hungary during the revolution, or went there as soon as it started. But now we have an entirely new—and in a way more compelling—source: Peter Fryer's *The Hungarian Tragedy*, just published in England.

Peter Fryer is a young (29-year-old) former correspondent of the London *Daily Worker*, who was sent by his paper to cover the uprising in Hungary, and who managed to experience its most heroic two-week period, October 26 to November 11. Though a trained and disciplined Communist (he covered the Rajk trial in 1949), Fryer is also unquestionably honest and idealistic in the best sense of the word. In August, 1956, having published a few mildly critical articles about Rakosi's Hungary, he was told by a British party secretary to "think again, leave the sniping and the muckraking to the capitalist Press, and write with passion and enthusiasm about the New Hungary you are privileged to see." "Two months later," he says,

> . . . I was privileged to see the New Hungary collapse like a house of cards as soon as its people rose to their feet, and I must reserve my passion and enthusiasm for the Communists and non-Communists who fought for liberty, won it—and had it torn from their grasp by foreign intervention.

His outspoken dispatches, however, were either (at first) garbled beyond recognition, or suppressed altogether. In one case, after listening to Fryer over the phone, one of the *Daily Worker* editors proceeded to read him a passage from a resolution of the Polish United Workers Party. Another time—the last time, in fact—upon receiving Fryer's passionate description of the Soviet massacre in Budapest (reproduced in the book), the editor withheld it from his own staff. It was at this point that Fryer realized that he must resign from the paper.

A DEDICATED Marxist, Fryer did not resign from the party. His hope to lead a struggle against the CP leadership for its "abandonment" of Socialist principles" did not last long, however, for he was soon suspended, and then expelled for good. Yet some of the myths of his past are still with him. Writing about Hungary *circa* 1952-53, he employed euphemistic phrases such as "mistakes" or "the CP leaders did not keep faith with the people"—even though, in the introduction to the book, he writes sarcastically of the period following the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU (*i.e.*, Spring 1956), when "we allowed ourselves to speak of 'errors,' 'abuses,' 'violations of Socialist legality' and sometimes, greatly daring, 'crimes'." Similarly, he must note "the many positive achievements registered in Hungary after liberation" (including "public ownership" of industry), even though he minces no words in describing the utter depravity of Communist rule in Hungary.

BUT on the whole Fryer's is a courageous book, written with sincerity and vigor. He witnessed the workings of the revolutionary committee in the town of Magyarovar, and learned that most of its members were either former Social Democrats who had withdrawn from political activity in 1948, after the forced merger of the Socialist with the Communist party, or former CP members. At the same town, too, he saw the bodies of 80 people, among them children and infants, shot down a day earlier by the hated secret police, when a totally unarmed crowd of 5,000 demonstrated—"not for the restoration of capitalism," he notes, bitterly, but for an end to the Soviet occupation and the abolition of the secret police. He witnessed the lynching of the officer in charge of the troops, wounded in the melee, and released by the hospital in response to the clamor of a crowd frenzied beyond endurance; yet he reports that he neither saw nor heard of murderous rampages, pogroms, and mass atrocities against rank-and-file members of the CP, as has been frequently alleged in the Western press. In fact he reports that the intensely moral *élan*, so peculiar to periods of revolutionary turmoil was hardly marred by mob excesses and that with rare exceptions it was only the loathed members of the AVH who met with the accumulated wrath of the Hungarian people.

He observed the Gyor national committee in action, and was deeply im-

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pressed by its efficiency and political moderation. (It was Gyor, according to Deutscher, which became the "real headquarters" of the "counter-revolution," dominated, of course, by the "clergy.") In Babolna, a state farm near Gyor, he witnessed the formation of the workers' council, and was moved by its awkward attempts at democratic procedure—the first such attempt in over ten years. ("I am sorry it is so slow," a worker sheepishly told him after the election of officials, "but you must understand we have not got any practice in electing people." And Fryer adds: "I think my last remaining illusion about the past was destroyed at that moment.") Finally, he was present in Budapest on November 4, when Soviet tanks reentered the city, and describes the succeeding battle in gripping and remarkably vivid terms.

THE entire book is permeated with a kind of fury—the fury of a man who has seen the ruthless betrayal of his entire system of beliefs, and who is desperately anxious to make the betrayal known to those whose faith has not yet been tested by reality. Hence its polemical tone, its emotional invocations, its irony and its anger. Yet it is not a tone that could possibly offend, for it never degenerates into vilification, and it goes hand in hand with a scrupulous attention to factual detail, and logical argumentation. He is at pains to explode one Soviet lie after another; the charge that the Nagy government was moving to the right (it was a *popular* government, and left-of-center to boot); the ever-mounting danger of counter-revolution (of course there was a danger, but hardly one to take seriously); Mindszenty the fascist ("Mindszenty on the whole supported the Nagy government, and his one reference to private ownership came in a sentence beginning: 'We want a classless society'!"); "white terror" (utter nonsense); the "mysterious" abundance of arms and ammunition in the hands of the rebels (the army either joined the insurgents or handed over its arms to them); etc.

One wonders, as one reads Fryer's account, what effect it will have on hard-boiled "realists" of Deutscher's persuasion. And it is a sad commentary on the state of contemporary politics that while many a dedicated Communist will undoubtedly be shocked to the core (in England the Communist party will probably never recover from the impact of Khrushchev's speech and Soviet action in Hungary), people like Deutscher will remain serenely calm and unperturbed. For Deutscher, viewing the Hungarian Revolution in its "historical perspective" (the number of corpses will soon be forgotten—it's the dialectic that matters), will probably regard the young Peter Fryer as a headstrong "infantile leftist" (which, in a sense, he undoubtedly is). And level-headed Leninists, as is well known, have little patience for romantic leftist adventurers.

In Praise of Childhood

by William Jay Smith

IN A remote island in the New Hebrides I once met a French planter who spoke of the years spent on his plantation with the hesitation of one who had grown accustomed to silence. He said that the visit of a planter from a neighboring island was indeed a splendid thing, that a face, even a familiar one, became an event of importance. People who have lived such solitary lives learn to use their eyes: they see the common things which surround them freshly each day with the clear vision of children. They can look on the world as if they were really seeing it for the first time. It is this vision which gives *Eloges,* the product of a similar isolation in fabulous surroundings, its immediate and universal appeal.

Eloges and Other Poems, by St.-John Perse, bilingual edition, translation by Louise Varèse (Bollingen Series-Pantheon; $2).

Published in Paris in 1911, it was the first volume of poems by one of France's greatest living poets, Alexis St. Léger Léger, or, as he has become known to us, St.-John Perse. Much has been written of M. Léger's career as one of France's foremost prewar diplomats, first in the Orient, then as secretary to Briand, and of his subsequent exile in Washington. It is true that his diplomatic travels and experiences in various parts of the world have influenced his work in subtle ways. But it is interesting that most of the poems in this volume were written while he was a student in his twenties before he had given up his medical studies. Although some of the poems were added later, the volume presents mainly the poet's earliest work, which grew out of his youth on the small island of Saint-Léger-les-Feuilles near Guadeloupe. The subject of *Eloges* is childhood itself, and the poems, as the title indicates, are poems of praise. *Eloges,* parts of which have been translated into Spanish, Italian, and German, was first published in an English translation by Louise Varèse in 1944. The Bollingen Series has now reissued Mrs. Varèse's translation in revised form.

Berlioz once wrote, describing a vivid scene of his adolescence: "Life was evidently outside me, far away, very far." It is this outside, far-off world which St.-John Perse gives us in these poems. While the subject is shadowy, almost legendary, the approach to it is luminous and direct: St.-John Perse writes of what he knew and of what he knows. "Childhood, my love," the poet exclaims; and the poems are an apostrophe to his own specific childhood in the Antilles. He writes of the town where the candy vendor "battles the wasps whose flight is like the bites of sunlight on the back of the sea," and where the walls, to the child returning from his missionary school, "smell of hot bread," and of the plantation where the mute faces of the servants "paused like burnt-out stars behind our chairs," of the country around it where the old people in the courtyards drink "punches the color of pus." Childhood is addressed with reverence; the recurring words throughout are "joy," "esteem," "praise," and "celebration."

ONE of the characteristics of the poetry of St.-John Perse has been its sustained psalm-like fervor; and we find him here at the beginning of his work writing in a veritable intoxication of reverence which no modern poet, not even Dylan Thomas in his Welsh rhapsodies, has ever equalled.

He recreates from memory the living

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world of childhood through a reiteration of sensuous images: bright everyday household things are evoked alongside old and indistinct ones like the disparate objects heaped up by a hurricane, grown over with old roots and green vines. The long, winding *versets* themselves—and in this the form is superbly fitted to the subject—suggest the gnarled and twisted lianas reaching out to claim everything in their path. Images recording the long, slow, hazy sweep of time and memory gather slowly: the dresses of the servant girls sweep across the floor, voices are heard from the different levels of the garden, the

> . . . Dreamer with dirty cheeks
> Comes slowly out of
> An old dream all streaked with
> violences, wiles, and splendor,
> And jeweled in sweat, toward the
> odor of meat
> He descends
> Like a woman trailing: her linen, all
> her clothes, and her hanging hair.

Again,

> Rhythms of pride flow down the
> red mornes,
> Turtles roll in the narrows like
> brown stars.

The wind, rising between the islands, sweeps above the houses and over an old man's chest; the smell of coffee drifts up the stairs. The child speaks:

> "When you stop combing my hair, I'll
> stop hating you."
> The child wants his hair combed on the
> doorstep.
> "Don't pull like that. It's bad enough
> being touched. When you've fin-
> ished my hair, I'll have hated you."
> Meanwhile the wisdom of day takes
> the shape of a fine tree
> and the swaying tree,
> loosing a pinch of birds,
> scales off in the lagoons of the sky a
> green so beautiful, there is nothing
> that is greener except the water-bug.
> "Don't pull on my hair so far . . ."

Everything is drawn out thread-like, worn away. The heart itself, under its burden of love and memory, drags as if along the decks of a ship, more exhausted than an old swab.

Those who have followed the poems of St.-John Perse carefully are struck by his constant use of the image of the doorway, the entrance to the house, through which life comes and goes, and of the great gates through which civilization has passed. The door, the gate, means both welcome and farewell. It becomes, in a specific sensual sense, that gateway of the body toward which all desire is directed. Psychologically, it marks the division between the inner and outer world: to the child, on the threshold of experience, there is no such division, but to the adult, and to the artist, there is the constant passage between, the balance kept between light and dark, present and past. In the later poetry of St.-John Perse the exile becomes a common figure—man uprooted from his homeland, civilizations lost and buried by time and conquest; and yet the exile always returns. He returns in the triumph of language, in the magnificence of his artifacts, in the depth of his dream. St.-John Perse speaks for that rich human exchange which is the glory of man.

In her preface, Mrs. Varèse quotes, as she had in the earlier edition, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who said, with reference to St.-John Perse's *Anabase*: " . . . a work of this kind is simply untranslatable. In such cases the translation can play no other role than that of a very exact, conscientious report."

In her revision Mrs. Varèse seems to me to have achieved something more than mere conscientious exactitude. "If the tone is not exact—that is, an echo of the original—a work cannot be called a translation," she says. Her tone in this case is exact, and the echo rings true, although at times, as she herself admits, she may seem to fuss too much. (Since I am unable at the moment to consult her earlier version, I cannot say how valuable or necessary the fussing has been.) She is certainly superior to many translators of St.-John Perse by reason of the fact that she does not strive for pretty poetical effects. Mrs. Varèse's translation, on the whole, not only does justice to the original but is a pleasure in itself.

Money May Not Be Everything, But . . .

by Webster Schott

BRENDAN GILL's new novel is quite different from his previous work, and it has disappointed many of the persons who thought highly of *The Trouble of One House* (1950). *The Day the Money Stopped* is nearly all dialogue, and it's constructed much like a play. It takes place during a single morning in an attorney's office in a small Connecticut town, and four persons do all the talking. I should say arguing, for the conversations are about money: the money which Charlie Morrow believes he should be getting in his father's will; the money Charlie has thrown away during his wastrel's life in New York City; the money left to his self-righteous brother, Richard; the money Charlie must have to free himself from debts and bad checks.

The Day the Money Stopped, by Brendan Gill (Doubleday; $2.95).

The other two persons in the novel are an unmarried sister and a young secretary, whom Charlie has on the edge of the bed by the novel's end. Apparently one of the secretary's purposes is to help Mr. Gill define Charlie as the graying, ever-ready chaser of skirts while providing the appropriate sexual motivation for Charlie's salvation from himself at last.

To explore the act of self-discovery and provide entertainment, which he does every time Charlie opens his mouth, may be all Mr. Gill had in mind. Unfortunately, perhaps, he does it with an urbanity that early in the process discourages one from taking *The Day the Money Stopped* any more seriously than Charlie appears to have been taking himself. It may be that because Charlie is so involved in dominating the action, conjuring up the family ghosts and attacking the passiveness to life which has paid off so well in the will for brother Richard, Mr. Gill himself lost sight of what Charlie and his brother stand for, what they may represent in broad terms.

Intentional or not, along the way of Charlie's self-discovery the novel becomes a commentary on the manners of the modern American upper-middle

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class (or lower-upper, if you like), the five-figure aristocracy. Money is the essential distinction of this class, if I follow Mr. Gill correctly. And it is the difference in their attitudes toward money which makes Richard and Charlie the antipodes of the class. The revelation which almost deprives Richard of words is that Charlie actually has "used capital as income," securities given him by his father, to keep his night lights burning and the abortionists busy. For Charlie, money has but one purpose, to be spent:

> ". . . Money may not be everything, but by God it can buy everything—health, friendship, love, happiness."

And it's not in the having, but in the spending, that Charlie's kind of dollar aristocracy feels its differences from those below, its own pain of economic strangulation.

> ". . . You can starve on a lot of different levels, you know. You can be just as broke and sometimes a hell of a lot broker on twenty thousand a year than you can on two. You can be so lucky and rich in the world's eyes and yet so rotten in debt that you can't even buy groceries . . . As for desperate, I know more about that than any poor man alive. The poor aren't allowed to swim as far out over their heads as I do. The system won't let them. They only dabble in desperation. I damn near drown in it."

Charlie's decision in the end, for which Mr. Gill has prepared us with subtle currents in the dialogue and the destruction of much of his hero's vanity, still comes as a surprise. In refusing to accept the twenty thousand dollars his brother and sister offer him to keep the family ghost in the closet, Charlie gives up the bindings to his class and the narcotic which has fed on his integrity. Self-discovery has come full cycle.

Viewed in this light, *The Day the Money Stopped* is more than a glib tour de force, and Charlie's brilliant lines more a sign of his social milieu than Mr. Gill's longing for a Broadway adaptation. For this particular time in our particular country *The Day the Money Stopped* seems to be a serious novel. But unless we dare to give it serious thought it is only a delightful series of repartees.

At Home in a Gray Rubber Sack

by Donald Malcolm

IN ONE of the stories in this collection, "A Moment of Green Laurel," the narrator has occasion to observe:

> More and more I find it difficult to take public matters seriously: a definite schizoid tendency, as a psychologist friend of mine would say, placing me figuratively in a gray rubber sack where, cut-off from the world outside, I might regard with neither pleasure nor dismay the interior of my private realm. . . .

One is tempted to pounce upon this passage and proclaim it "key," for to a certain extent Mr. Vidal himself appears to dwell in a private realm, attending only fitfully to the world at large. Part of this impression is doubtless due to the fact that in three of these stories he has focussed his attention upon the rather hermetic world of pederasty. The result, at times, is a curious breakdown in communication. In "The Zenner Trophy," for instance, a prep school student who has been nabbed in carnal conjunction with a classmate produces a vague feeling of envy in the teacher charged with expelling him. The teacher

> . . . realized that he was quite alone and he hated Flynn for reminding him of the long and tedious journey ahead, down an endless, chalk-smelling corridor where each forward step took him farther and farther from this briefly glimpsed design within a lilac day.

But surely a homosexual relationship is not the only means of escape from chalk-smelling corridors, nor is it, if we come to that, prominent among the alternatives that would occur to most people. As an observation post, the interior of a gray rubber sack evidently leaves something to be desired.

Nor is this tendency to withdraw to a private realm simply a question of the literary treatment of homosexuality. "The Ladies In The Library" is also faintly redolent of the rubber sack. This story concerns a gentleman named Walter, the last surviving male of the Bragnet family who, at the instigation of a match-making cousin, consents to visit Miss Mortimer, a lady currently in possession of the old family estate. His first impression of the lady is a disagreeable one, but in time she begins to grow on him. Also present at this house party are three sisters named Claudia, Alice and Laura, who are much given to knitting. One afternoon, feeling rather peaked, Walter is sitting on the terrace when he overhears a conversation of the knitting sisters; a conversation that strongly hints at their sharing more than just initials with the Three Fates.

"I'm afraid I can't get this last knot undone."

"Then use the scissors. Here."

At which point, Walter feels a "massive constriction in his chest," Miss Mortimer appears to him "over the edge of a receding world," and Mr. Vidal abandons the enterprise, leaving the reader to entertain himself as best he can with a game of "Symbol, symbol, who's got the symbol?" The delights of this pastime are boundless, as everybody knows, but I am not sure they are an adequate substitute for the pleasure of reading fiction.

However that may be, Mr. Vidal's most successful stories, in my opinion, are those in which his admirable talents are brought to bear on "the world outside," without the mediation of a complicated symbolism on the one hand, nor an attempt to extract significance and pathos from simple psychological curiosities on the other. I found "Erlinda and Mr. Coffin" a wonderfully comic invention, and its narrator ("In olden times my social activities in this island city were multifarious . . .") a caricature of almost Dickensian intensity. But the best story in the collection is "A Moment of Green Laurel," in which the tendency to retire to a "private realm" is itself one of the elements of the fictional pattern. Having created a narrator in whose mind past and present interpenetrate, Mr. Vidal achieves, at the climax of the story, a startling synthesis of terror and nostalgia.

A Thirsty Evil: Seven Short Stories, by Gore Vidal (Zero Press: $3).

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ART

Good Impressions

THE great print show now in Chicago, after originating in Minneapolis and hanging in Cleveland, emphasizes again the valuable new look modern art has given works of the past. It was not so long ago that the very word "print" meant either a reproduction of a painting or a kind of souvenir picture of a place, a time, a person. The enormous vogue for horse prints, steamboat prints, costume prints and the rest collapsed as it had to and unfortunately buried in the ruins the 500-year-old tradition of print-making as a valid art in itself.

Two aspects of modern art are responsible for the rehabilitation: its boundless energy, which carries it constantly to new forms and new ways of incarnating form; and its open minded eclecticism, which allows it to examine without prejudice any art of the past (save only that of five years ago) in search of values once again ready to be released.

Thus the majority of the masters of modern art, with the encouragement and sometimes the instigation of dedicated publishers like Vollard and Skira, have made print editions as works of art. There have also come into existence once again printmakers, artists who work primarily in the multiple impression media.

From all this activity has come a general re-acceptance of printmaking of the past. A better opportunity to see that work could hardly be asked than "Prints—1400-1800." The show is well organized to follow the main developments in European prints from the discovery of the process through Goya, yet, by ignoring any didactic scheme, it has been able to concentrate exclusively on good impressions. While prints by definition imply many identical images, the identity begins to disintegrate, in some cases, almost from the first proof.

Yet many of the earliest prints of the show, the religious reminders and playing cards of the fifteenth century, have the clarity and precision of line of prints pulled yesterday. It is necessary, for most contemporary viewers, to make a visual adjustment, a screening down of the lens, in order to look at old master prints. Painting, in our time, has gone big scale and none bigger than the American. We are so accustomed to getting our overall view of a work of art from half-way across the room, that we quite easily miss such prints as these entirely. The average size of the prints on view is considerably less than this page.

Early Northern printmaking is represented chiefly by the Master E. S., as the unknown Rhenish engraver is called, and by Martin Schongauer, the Colmar painter. E. S. relates in feeling to much manuscript illumination of the day. His most striking work on view is a "Garden of Love," composed in the fairly rare form of a figure 8 made by background castles and crags framing a distant jousting match and by the foreground fence around the garden, wherein three couples are disporting themselves.

The print contains an astonishing witness to its maker's concern for composition over verisimilitude. The gate of the garden has a little roof across its top which forms part of the top half of the figure 8, slanting up at about 30 degrees. The gate's threshhold slants down at the same angle, starting the bottom half of the 8. Thus the whole fence is an optical illusion, curving up when you regard the game of war, down when you regard the game of love.

PROBABLY the standout German print in the show is the Dürer "Great Fortune." The enigmatic, monumental and anything but attractive nude—almost bloated in the German style—floats serenely, balanced improbably on a little globe, with a bridle and bit draped over one arm and a chalice raised before her. Below, a whole hidden German village world is spread over a mountainside.

The Art Institute has augmented the show with a good deal of extra material from its own substantial collections, including a group of plates from Piranesi's "Prisons." It was a bold stroke on the part of the Chicago print curator, Carl Schniewind, to place the Italian where he belongs chronologically, between the Dutch sublimity and the cold Spanish ferocity. I, for one, have always found something of the adventurer-poseur in Piranesi's prints. He seems a kind of Dali out of his time. The fantastic architectural interiors with their occasional mysterious mechanics, their grandiose flights of stairs and of the morbid imagination, their heavy chains dropping from nowhere to nowhere, inevitably suggest movie sets for some Gothic romance. Yet here they hold their own in their august company. Rather like Italian opera, they take melodramatic claptrap and make it work through sheer lack of inhibition in piling it on. What they achieve is the unwilling suspension of disbelief.

THE Rembrandt gallery is superb. The extremely rare first state portrait of Arnold Tholinx conveys precisely that special quality of the medical man's eyes, a combination of total cynicism and total compassion, that ought to go with the profession. The young Jan Six is in a lighter tone, a joyous skimming of the surface again perfectly rendered and with assurance given that the surface of life can only be seen so well from beneath.

Several of the great Biblical scenes dominate the gallery. The Hundred Guilder print, in a fine impression of all its incredible complexity, is there. Side by side are two states, the first and the fourth, of the "Three Crosses." Together they have a power more than the sum of both. The Crucifixion scene darkens, is abstracted, simplified, tremendously intensified. Taken together the two states are a compelling testament of Christian contemplation of Christianity's central event.

A similar arrangement of two states of "Christ Presented to the People" removes the people entirely in the later impression. The spectator himself is addressed by Pilate.

Goya deals more directly with human agony. It is experience witnessed in the "Disasters of War," experience commented upon in the "Caprices," experience stylized into ritual in the "Tauromachy." The final print in the show is Goya's "Giant," in which the great, moonlit hulking figure casts over his shoulder a puzzled squint at man.

FRANK GETLEIN

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MUSIC

A Poor-Man's Louis XIV

The Ballad of Baby Doe, the new Douglas Moore-John Latouche opera recently previewed on ABC's *Omnibus,* turns out to be a sprightly exercise in Americana, and one which should do well when it gets to Broadway.

For his text, Mr. Latouche went to the history of Colorado's Silver King, H. A. W. Tabor—a man whose life was so operatic that Latouche's job was more one of stripping away legend than of adding to it. Tabor was, in his heyday, a poor man's Louis XIV. A shopkeeper who struck it rich, he was a conspicuous consumer who bought whole towns and all the people in them; who contemptuously flouted the laws of God and man; and who died —a lesson to us all—in the gutter.

At the height of his glory, Tabor got shut of his termagant old wife and hoodwinked a priest into blessing his marriage to a pretty divorcée, the notorious Lizzy (Baby) Doe. The manner in which he and Baby lived it up is the subject of this work, with an emphasis on the melodramatic rather than the moral consequences of their degradation. Latouche plunges into their difficulties with relish, and only occasionally pauses for breath. He tells their story with all deliberate haste, and without digressing into speculations about the states of their psyches. It's been a long time since we've seen an American opera without Freudian overtones, and *Baby Doe* demonstrates again that, in a medium as contrived as opera, two-dimensional characters are the most manageable ones.

Moore's musical style lends itself to a text of this sort. I've never been quite sure whether Douglas Moore is the Grandma Moses of American music, or rather its Norman Rockwell. His naïveté seems unaffected, but so do his slickness and sentimentality, and he would never dream of planting booby-traps, *à la* Virgil Thomson, in his folksy-sounding scores. In *Baby Doe,* his music ambles along unobtrusively, supporting the text but not getting in the way. The heights of excitement that he occasionally touches are well below those of Puccini (from whom he derives his stage techniques) or of Menotti, with whom he will be competing on Broadway. But Moore compensates in taste for what he lacks in imagination. He has the rare good sense to exploit his knack for large theatrical forms and to limit his musical problems to those he can easily solve.

Moore has a superb technique for vocal writing, and a shameless willingness to give singers what they want—an opportunity to show off in public. *Baby Doe* makes great demands on the principal singers (Baby herself has to have a good coloratura and a usable high E), but the parts are designed to make good singers sound magnificent. Since Moore writes so well for singers, it is curious that he hasn't enriched the new work with more take-home melody. There seems to be a feeling current among ultra-conservative composers that there is something lowbrow about tunes and, conversely, something highbrow about shapeless declamatory singing. One sometimes gets the impression that composers such as Moore and Menotti are out to prove that they can be just as tuneless as the Viennese expressionists. There are arias in *Baby Doe,* and a couple of them are quite memorable. But there are only perhaps a third as many completely worked-out pieces here as there would be in a Mozart opera of comparable length—or, for that matter, in any American musical comedy.

AFTER the television performance of *Baby Doe,* I got hold of the composer's manuscript to see how much we had missed in the short version. Television producers seem to get a special satisfaction out of cutting operas by half, and it's hard not to resent their editing when what is left of the piece may give a false impression.

But after examining *Baby Doe* in score, I felt that the cutting for TV was justified. The singing was consistently superior, the production was fine, little of the best music was left out, and the story (which suffered most) was generally comprehensible. In taking opera off its shaky pedestal and presenting it as mass entertainment, the TV companies are doing a great service to the whole idea of musical theatre.

It would be preposterous for them to try to sell foreign language opera to their public, so they are wise to choose works originally composed in English or pieces at the edge of the standard repertory which can be translated into English without raising a howl from the purists. While it is too early to hope that opera will become as Americanized as pizza, there is no reason to doubt that, through the medium of television, it will begin to assume a more sensible place among the popular arts.

ROBERT EVETT

Notes on Contributors

ABRAHAM BRUMBERG is associate editor of the USIA publication, *Problems of Communism.* WILLIAM JAY SMITH recently published his translations of Jules LaForgue. WEBSTER SCHOTT is a freelance writer. FRANK GETLEIN is art critic of *The Milwaukee Journal.*

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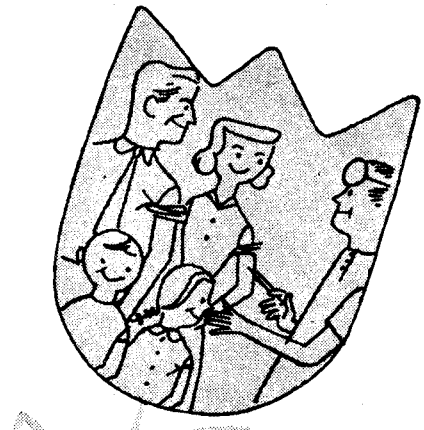

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Correspondence

(*Continued from page 3*)

establishment of Israel in its historical boundaries from the Nile to the Euphrates, but also call for unlimited immigration into Israel. You can crowd just so many people into 8,050 square miles. . . .

Other interesting facts with regard to the situation are that in opposition to the commonly held idea, Israel was not created by the United Nations. The Security Council refused to "create" Israel. Subsequently the General Assembly *recommended* a division of Palestine. This recommendation was never accepted.

Israel has been condemned by the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission and the Security Council approximately 24 times, while no Arab state has ever been so condemned.

The problem of the persecuted Jews in Germany was a Western European problem. By attempting to push it off on the Arab countries instead of taking the responsibility ourselves, we have created as many homeless refugees as were taken care of by stealing land from the Arabs on which to settle the Jews from Germany.

J. JENY

Berkeley, California

" . . . the points at issue"

THE "facts" in Mrs. Jeny's letter appear to be based on propaganda material published b the "American Friends of the Middle East" and the Arab Information Office.

Your correspondent bases her claim of "the intentions of the Israelis to expand into Arab territory" on certain specified pages in the Israel Government Yearbook for the years 1952 and 1955. It is a pity that she has not quoted the paragraphs to which reference is made. The pages in the 1952 edition to which reference is made are an article by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, and are in the main a review of Jewish history, with only references to geography and boundaries that are factual, such as "The homeland of the Jewish people stands upon the Western edge of Asia" (page 9) or "1813 years after the fall of Bar Kochba, the State of Israel has been resurrected in the Western part of the Land" (of Israel) —the "Land of Israel" being the literal translation of the Hebrew term for historic Palestine.

The reference to the 1955 edition of the Government Year Book is to an article on "Boundaries, Area and Geographic Position," which again states that Israel was established in "part of the Land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael—Palestine)." This is a statement of fact and can no more be made to mean that Israel has expansionist ambitions than the factual statement that, for example, "the United States is situated in part of the North American continent" can mean that the United States has expansionist ambitions.

Mrs. Jeny refers to platforms of the "different Israeli groups" as published in the 1955 edition of "Facts and Figures." The pages quoted contain a few-line summary of party platforms of 14 political parties now represented in the Israeli Knesset (Parliament). Only one of these parties, holding only 15 seats in a 120-member Parliament calls for boundaries larger than the present borders of Israel.

Mrs. Jeny states that no Arab state has ever been condemned by the Mixed Armistice Commission or the UN Security Council. There are in fact on the record several hundred condemnations.

Between July, 1949, and October, 1955, the Mixed Armistice Commission dealt with 2,231 cases of armed attacks of Arabs against Israel, 272 sabotage cases, 237 armed robberies, and 5,467 cases of theft committed inside Israel by marauders from the Arab states.

On each occasion where the Security Council dealt with Israeli action, the Council did not fail to mention that such action had been provoked by continuous Arab sabotage and murder.

Mrs. Jeny appears to fear that Israel's growing population will force it to seek territorial expansion, and states: "You can crowd just so many people in 8,050 square miles." I agree that it might be difficult to find a livelihood for many people in an area of 8,000 miles in, say, the Sahara Desert, but on the other hand, in the State of Massachusetts, the area of which is less than 8,000 square miles, the United States Census of 1950 gave a population of over four-and-a-half million. Israel has at present a population of 1.8 million. Experts have agreed that the country can more than double its present population within the next few years.

H. Y. ORGEL

Embassy of Israel Information Attache
Washington, D. C.

To Our Readers . . .

AS WE announced several weeks ago, this is the last issue of *The New Republic* to be distributed nationally on newsstands by the American News Company. We are happy to say, however, that this Journal will continue to be available each week at *selected* newsstands throughout the country, distribution being handled by the Eastern News Company. ENC is a world-wide distributor of such educational publications as *Foreign Affairs, Art News, Antioch Review, High Fidelity, The Listener, Partisan Review, Etude, The London Times Supplement.*

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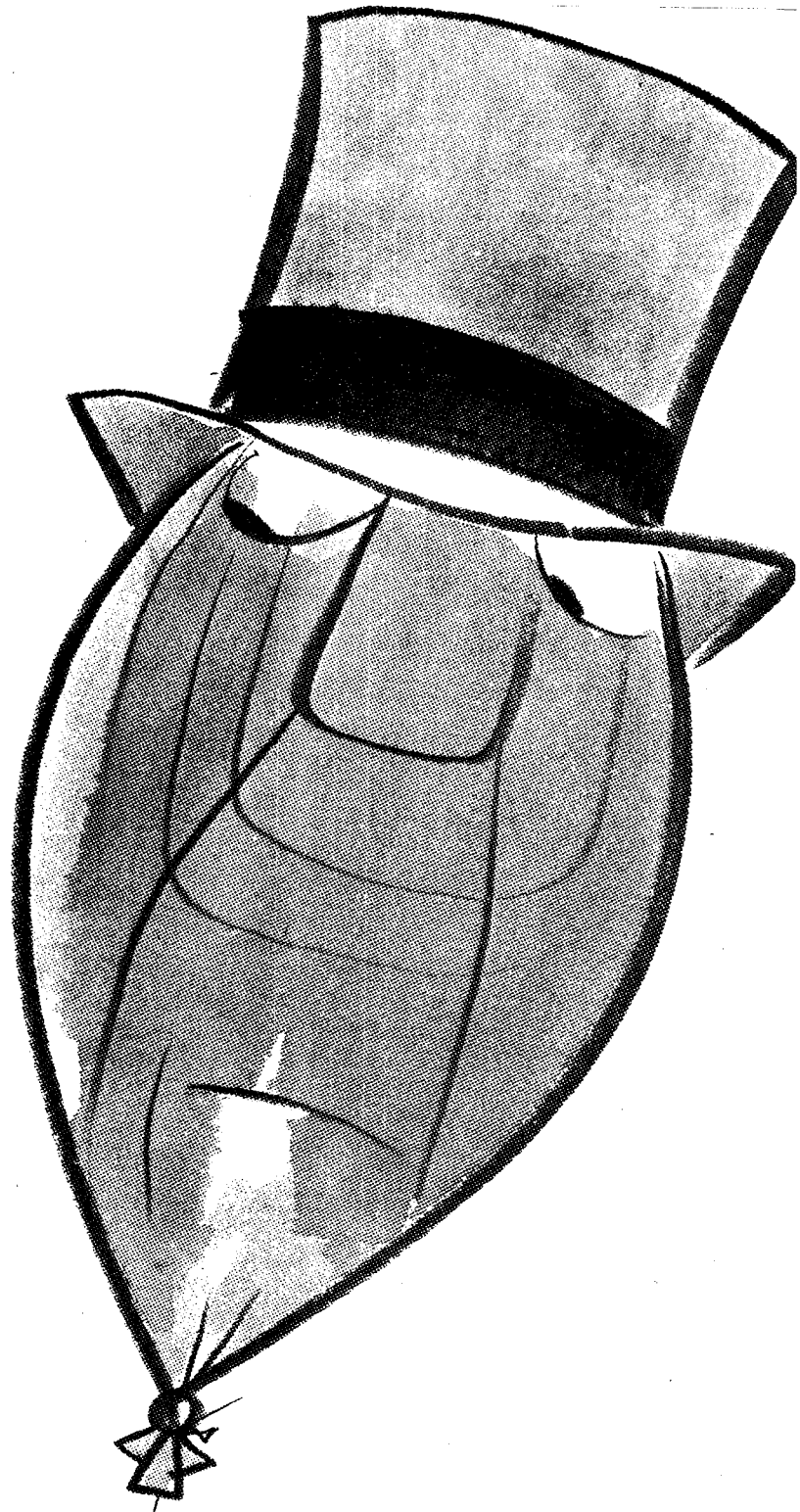

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